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ABSTRACT

The concept of educational leadership in the black community has undergone some change since the advent of community control and decentralization. Educational administration must now encompass the social process of the local social system. In the Woodlawn locality of Chicago, (one of the ten poorest Chicago communities), the Woodlawn Experimental Schools Project (WESP) was instituted to restructure the social system through a mutuality of effort for the improvement of achievement. Decisions and policy were to be made by The Woodlawn Community Board (TWCB), comprised of members from the University of Chicago, Chicago Board of Education, and from The Woodlawn Organization. TWCB will use a WESP model to hopefully provide the vehicle for decision-making power of the black community residents of Woodlawn in the educational institution. This model for group mobility emerged because an earlier individual mobility model failed. Black community leadership, therefore turns to the aggregation model as an alternative, which will assess reality in terms of the local social system, choose the most effective goals and objectives, and widen their finite set of knowledge to include a multitude of alternatives. (RJ)

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Educational Leadership for the Black Community: A Practitioner's View

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The concept of educational leadership in the black community has undergone some change since the advent of community control and decentralization. The idea of citizen participation introduced by agencies with OEO funds and Community Action Programs and further enhanced by Model Cities Projects has eroded somewhat the Weberian "charismatic leader" effect common among black people. OEO-sponsored agencies often seek out indigenous leaders and give them "leadership training." These "leaders" then act in predictable and loyal ways.[1] In Chicago, poverty programs are used to maintain the patronage system of the Democratic machine. Therefore, the political leadership in the black community legitimizes the plans and posture of elected officials. Very few positive outcomes accrue for the masses.

Consequently, citizen participation entered the educational institution at the time when communities were hostile toward the "maximum loyalty requirement" of federally-funded programs. Taking the name of community control, citizen participation was included in an aggregation model[2] described as political, or dealing with the arbitration of conflict through the re-distribution of decision-making power.[3] Under the decentralization label such a model is called administrative, or dealing with the arbitration of conflict through the re-structuring of roles and relationships.[4] In both cases the models must deal with conflict, roles and their expectations in the educational institution.

To understand the present demands upon educational leadership, the concept of administration as a social process and of its context as a local social system is useful.[5] A local social system is "an assemblage or aggregation of individuals and institutional

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organizations located in an identifiable geographical locality and functioning in various degrees of interdependence as a permanent organized unit of the social order."[6] In the Woodlawn Experimental Schools Project (WESP) the aggregation of individuals is labeled CAPTS.[7] The C represents all community people in any capacity such as business, civil service, city agencies, taxpayers, landlords, etc. The A represents administrators in the particular institution (in this case educational). The P is for parents. The T stands for teachers, and the S is for students. The institutional organizations are The Woodlawn Organization, the University of Chicago and The Chicago Board of Education. The identifiable geographical locality is Woodlawn, functioning as one of the ten poorest of the seventy-five community areas in Chicago, Illinois, near the University of Chicago and occupying valuable lake front property which the city wishes to reclaim for resettlement by the white middle class.

The social system model as developed by Getzels and Guba[8] and expanded by Getzels[9] has four dimensions: the normative, nomothetic or institutional; the idiographic or individual; the biological; and the cultural. The component conceptual elements of the first dimension are the institution, role and expectation; of the second, personality and need-dispositions; the third includes the biological equipment, impulses, abilities and predispositions; and the last dimension, an ethos and values. Using Getzels' expanded model the nature of the conflict which exists within the local social system can be explored. We can define conflict as the mutual interference of parts, actions, and reactions in a social system.[10]

WESP, and E.S.E.A., Title III, Government-funded Project under Public Law 89-10 was designed to re-structure the social system through a mutuality of effort for the improvement of achievement. Decisions and policy were to be made for this experimental district by The Woodlawn Community Board, first composed of 21 members, 7 from the University of Chicago,

7 from the Chicago Board of Education and 7 from The Woodlawn Organization (TWO). Since the inception, the University has given 3 of its 7 seats to The Woodlawn Organization bringing their contingent to 10.

The Woodlawn Community Board was created "in a context of conflict and a tentative spirit of good faith," for efforts of the Schools Committee of TWO were viewed by the public school system more often than not as expressions of hostility rather than as expressions of an interest in cooperative action. The Urban Development Project which originated in response to the pervasive evidence that inner-city public schools in the United States were not educating many of the children led to the Committee on Urban Education appointed by the President of the University and commissioned by him to study ways in which the University might contribute to the solution of problems of urban public education.[11]

Several assumptions made by The Woodlawn Organization indicated that there was conflict between the cultural values and institutions expectations, and between roles and within roles. TWO felt that the schools in East Woodlawn were guided by the values of white European supremacy and the superiority of people with money while most of the people in that community were black, African and poor. TWO also felt that the people whose lives were most affected by the educational institution had very little to say about what went on inside of its doors, and moreover, were rarely welcome to visit. While the schools were saying on the one hand that the parents didn't care whether their children studied or not, the parents were urging TWO to take some action against unproductive schools.

Additionally, the conflict between roles and within roles is related to the structural aspect of administration or the hierarchy of superordinate-subordinate relationships within the social system. The traditional school principal and district superintendent were the educational leaders. Using Getzels, Campbell and Lipham once again, "to lead is to engage in an act which initiates a structure in interaction with others," and the three leadership types are: normative,

personal and transactional. For the arbit ration of conflict the transactional style seems to be most appropriate for the black community because of the following:

> The transactional style calls attention to the need for moving toward one style under one set of circumstances and toward the other style under another set....[12]

The conflict between the cultural values and the institutional expectations results in requests for changes in curriculum, methodology and priorities, all of which create pressures and counter-pressures.

In the Chicago Public Schools, the curriculum emphasizes European civilization and thought. Columbus discovered America, giving the impression that America was lost and did not exist until Europeans arrived and ignoring the fact that outrigger canoes plowed the sea waters. Indians are still called by that incorrect European-given name. European values are extolled although even Europeans do not respect them. Both community control and decentralization are means of creating more flexible and accountable schools which reduce the disparity between these values and those of the community. The movement is the response of black parents to their lack of decision-making power in the educational institution.[13]

Using the CAPTS-WESP Model, The Woodlawn Community Board will hopefully provide the vehicle for such power. All members of CAPTS initiate plans and programs, and forward these to the Professional Bureaucracy (Principals and Teachers) for formulation into educational programs. They, in turn, send these programs to the WESP staff which is a catalyst or process group. This staff organizes and administers these programs, guiding them through The Woodlawn Community Board which rejects or accepts. If the proposed program requires action from the Chicago Board of Education, it is so referred. The Chicago Board of Education retains approval-veto power over the entire experimental district and The Woodlawn Community Board. Once approved, the program returns recommended to the WESP

staff for coordination and communication. Then it should be ready for implementation by the professional bureaucracy. All programs are evaluated finally by CAPTS. If the Chicago Board of Education or The Woodlawn Community Board vetoes or rejects a program, it returns to CAPTS and starts again.

Questions which arise in the process are: What is collective decision-making? What is collective responsibility? What is liability? Are there instances where collective decision-making is precluded by liability? What is cooperation? What is trust? How do these concepts affect the social system in any dimension? Answers to these questions are vital to the establishment of viable methods of community control or decentralization, especially in areas where conflict is great and the expectations of the community exceed the possibilities of the school.

According to Campbell and Layton, Americans expect a great many public benefits from their schools and these expectations in recent decades appear to be increasing, particularly expectations that schools contribute to national security, economic growth, social mobility and improved citizenship.[14] Their study indicates that education is more and more affected by general government and not simply educational government. Such is the case with Model Cities Programs. In any case, there is definitely the danger of expecting more than the schools can deliver.

Furthermore, Campbell and Layton discuss the need to recognize more fully both the possibilities and limitations of the school. The school is the instrument of society, it advises, it can do little unless it finds support in its milieu. Although schools have sometimes provided leadership for change, a realistic assessment of the interaction between the school and society is needed. Educational leadership in the black community demands such an understanding.

To be quite specific, Campbell and Layton say that the school alone cannot solve the integration problem. Unless job opportunities for black people are improved and open housing is provided, black folk will tend to live in ghettoes and their schools will tend to remain segregated. Integration is a total social problem and will require a coordinated attack by many social agencies if it is ever achieved.[15] On the other hand, integration might become necessary as the society contracts economically because whites will need the jobs now held by blacks. Notice the desegregation models utilized in education in Texas, Louisiana and southern parts, and the plight of the Black Muslims in Alabama.

Neither hard work nor formal education can solve all of the pressing problems of black people as long as whites have power over blacks. Power is the ability to make someone do something even if it is against his will. The school is the principal, although not the only, institution responsible for the information, skills and knowledge which maintain those in power. If blacks can make the school responsible to their needs, they will need to devise a mechanism for gaining power to control these schools in order to: (1) develop a more accurate conceptual framework for understanding reality, (2) achieve a better understanding of themselves, (3) become aware of the conceptual maps of those who wish to interfere and (4) create associations and insights which lead to better alternatives for the solution of their problems. Some previously excluded groups have supplemented the school and others have abandoned them. None have relied on them alone. The plight of the groups who <u>do</u> result in complete disillusionment. The Amish, Muslims, immigrants, Catholics and Jews attempted to improve their conditions from a separated vantage point. The intransigence of the firmly entrenched WASPS caused the excluded groups to use the only resource available, people. From the pseudospecies declaration, "We are the chosen people," grounded in religion, a strong group identity specification emerged attached to a territorial imperative.[16] This combination led to an intense nationalism which

transformed itself into a powerful group cohesion and support system projecting a negative identity.[17] The negative identity designated WASPS as harmful and they were excluded whereupon the need for cooperation developed within the excluded group. Within those confines, the human values were practiced. Group members chose each other for jobs, services and support.[18]

This model for group mobility emerged because the individual mobility model which worked for the WASPS (Protestant Ethic, Horatio Alger, etc.) failed the others. Individual mobility models work for members of the "in" group. It is possible that separatism will be necessary as long as groups have power over other groups. The blind cannot compete with the seeing. They need support. All such groups do. Black communities now impose this alternative on educational leaders through the demand for black principals, black teachers and black studies.

The educational leader in the black community is torn between the two ideologies of integration and nationalism. If he is a rational man, he continues to pursue truth in his effort to find a way to make the school productive for the poor. He often administers one of three useless and sometimes harmful models predicated on assumptions inimical to the poor: the Mental Health Model based on the idea that the child is sick and needs treatment; the Early Education Model which assumes that the child's home is the most dangerous place for him and the sooner he is in school, the better; and the specialization model which provides extra personnel for the amelioration of situations requiring money.

The Mental Health Model, for example, requires the client to adapt and adjust to a hostile environment. When a fish is removed from the water and left in a dry pan, the fish makes numerous contortions in its struggle for survival. A small child might say to his mother that the fish was sick. Actually, if the fish is returned to the water before it damages itself severely in its struggle, the fish will resume its swimming in a normal manner; for there

was nothing wrong with the fish in the first place. It was the environment which was hostile. What do we actually accomplish by forcing an individual to accommodate to a hostile condition like hunger?

The leader in the black community, therefore, turns to the aggregation model as a possible alternative, for the consolidation of people power to change the hostility of the environment so that the children of the community can grow. He strives for better concepts to define problems for it is the definition of a problem which determines the alternative chosen as a possible solution. A girl is sitting in a cold room with a coat on. A man enters and closes the window. She continues to wear her coat. He shrugs his shoulders and wonders why. She wears her coat because her dress is torn. He did not define the problem correctly therefore he could not provide the solution.

Educational leadership in the black community demands an aggregation model which will assess reality in terms of the local social system, choose the most effective goals and objectives for the clients, and widen their finite set of knowledge to include a multitude of alternatives. An alternative, once chosen, leads to a consequence which must be evaluated. The consequence provides new problems which need definitions. One starts again. This is the process of educational leadership in the black community.

Moreover, educational leadership in the black communities demands an aggregation model concerned with group mobility. This model must provide ways to: (1) assess the total social reality, (2) choose the most effective goals and objectives for black people regardless of the opposition of others and (3) widen the finite set of knowledge with a multitude of alternatives. Nahaz Rogers illustrates this point in his description of the Columbus Metropolitan Area Community Action Organization's program for "participatory capitalism." He says "One Key to participating in the creation of the instruments of production, is the participation in the

decision-making process that transcends all the institutions -- political, civic, financial, and legal. People must be involved with these in order to make the transition from powerlessness to participation in the decision-making processes which affect their daily lives."[19]

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7 See Figures 1 and 2.

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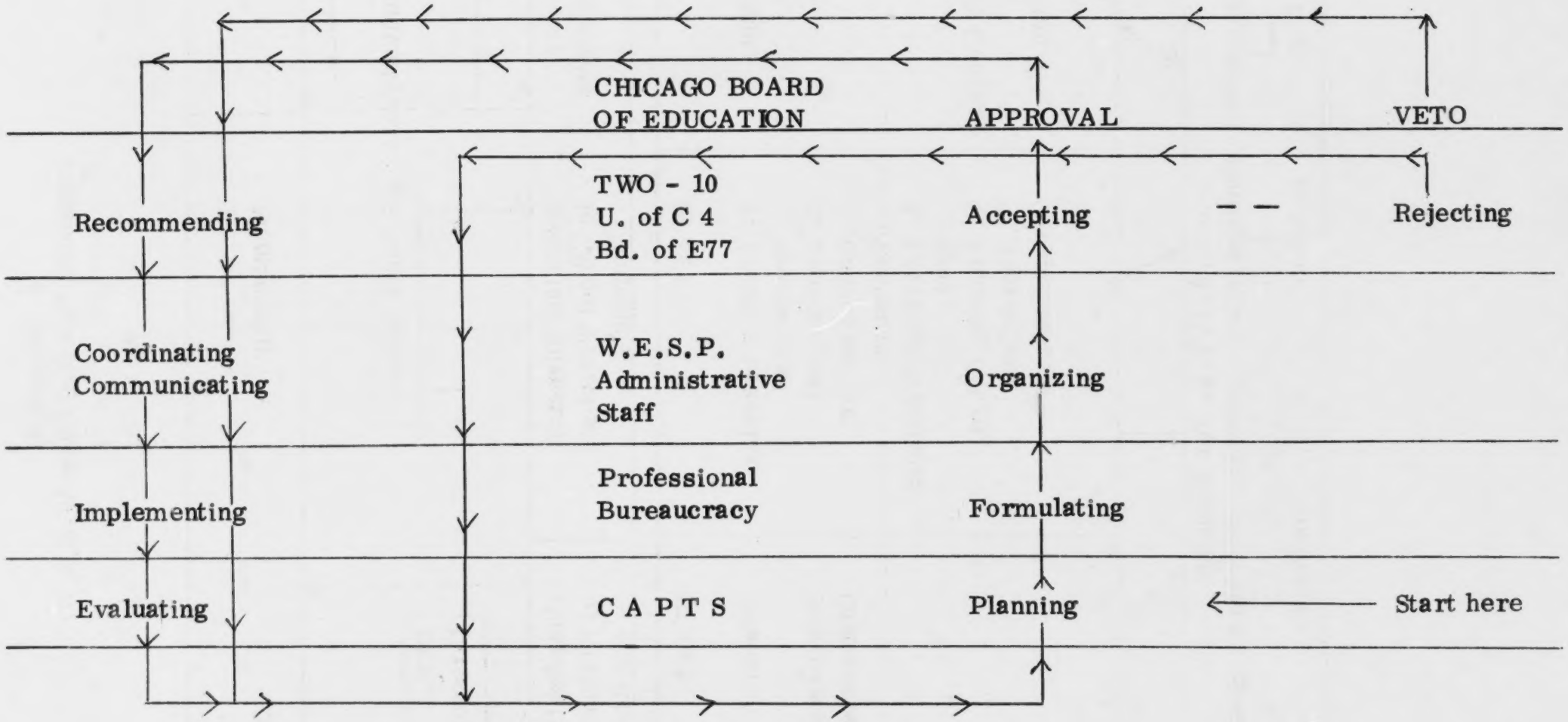
THE CAPTS-WESP DECISION-MAKING MODEL (Figure 1)



(Figure 2)
Suggested New Org Chart W.E.S.P.

W. C. B.